

# NATURE CURE FOR SOME WOMEN'S CONDITIONS



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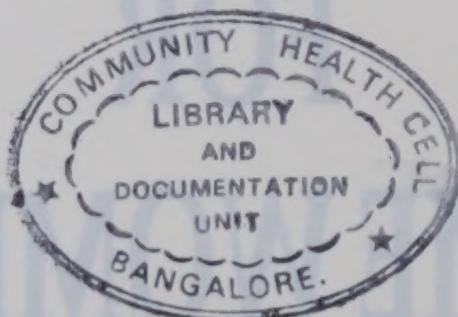


# **NATURE CURE FOR SOME WOMEN'S CONDITIONS**

**Nature Cure & Yoga Health Centre,  
Servants of the People Society,  
Lajpat Bhawan, Near Vikram Hotel,  
New Delhi-110024.**

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Cover

The Sun, the Sea and Land respectively represent the elements of fire, water and earth. The waves are caused by the elements of Aakaash (ether) and air.

The person embodying the five elements in a state of ecstasy, is all set to take a plunge in the ocean of bliss!

# FOREWORD

The Servants of the People Society was founded by Punjab Kesari Lala Lajpat Rai and inaugurated at Lahore in 1921 by Gandhiji. It is a life order. Only those who donate their whole life to the service of the people of the country can become its members. It had illustrious Life Members like Purushottamdas Tandon, Balvantray Mehta and Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Prime Minister of India, 1964-66. With its headquarters at Delhi, the Society is dedicated to the service of the people in more than 16 States.

Looking at the resources of the country in money and man-power, it was considered that the objective of "Health for all by 2000 AD" could not be achieved without popularising Nature Cure and Yoga. A Nature Cure and Yoga Health Centre was started in Delhi in October 1983. This Centre has made lot of progress and has become extremely popular. One of the objectives of this Centre is to publish books on this subject. Our first book in English, to serve as a basic primer on the subject, was published in 1988. This book "Back to Nature for HEALTHY LIVING" was released by Shri Rajiv Gandhi the Prime Minister of India, on 23rd August 1988. That book is now in its third edition. Food Therapy is the most important part of Nature Cure, so a new 264 page book on "Food of Health" was published in July 1991. It is a unique book on nutrition. It deals extensively with all aspects of some of the most important food items. It also deals with food as preventive medicine for various body conditions.

With the above background, the Centre has now decided to bring out six booklets on the subjects of Nature Cure for high blood pressure, nature cure for diabetes and similarly for asthma, arthritis, for some stomach conditions and for some women's conditions. This is the fourth of that series of booklets. The table of contents will show how comprehensively the subject has been dealt with.

In naturopathy, food plays a dominant role. Exercise including yoga comes next. Hydrotherapy can, in case of certain body

conditions, be very effective. Colourtherapy and acupressure have their own uses in certain conditions. Collectively, all these therapies can form an effective bulwark against disease.

Some eminent, knowledgeable and devoted persons have contributed various chapters of this booklet. The booklet has been co-ordinated and edited by Shri A.P. Dewan, who had been with the World Food Programme of UN/FAO, for more than 14 years and who is now the Chairman of our Nature Cure Centre.

Nature Cure techniques are known to work. Gandhiji used to say, "I have as much faith in the Nature Cure of diseases as I have in the innocence of children"! Suggestions made in this booklet are known to work but they require patience. Solution of chronic problems does take time. It may, however, be stated that all the suggestions made herein may not work with everybody to the same extent because of the differences of body chemistry, environment, heredity and mental make up etc. It will be, therefore, for you to try and find out which techniques suit your body condition the most. Such a trial will do no harm. Gandhiji also advised accordingly. He said, "Sparse and balanced diet may not be the same for everybody. It can be best worked out by the individual for himself through proper reading and careful thought". The objective of the information given in this booklet is to help you to design an appropriate programme for yourself so that you could effectively avoid such health hazards which may otherwise lie your way due to environment, heredity or habits. Involve your doctor, if you are already a victim of the disease, in evolving a set of naturopathic practices out of the suggestions contained in this booklet, which suit your genius the most.

These booklets are being produced in the service of the needy. I wish them luck.

Sevakram  
Chairman

Servants of the People Society  
Delhi Branch

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# Basic Approach

**A.P. Dewan**

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Woman is the "Janani", giver of birth to the human race. Woman is the "Shakti", The power; she is the embodiment of love—love for her children. She is capable of making the ultimate sacrifice—sacrifice for the sake of those whom she loves. These powers and sentiments of hers are due to the special attributes of her body and of her body chemistry. There are some special genes, some hormones, some amino acids, some enzymes and some electrical impulses, which she is made of, which make her position unique. In many religions of the world, woman, symbolically, is worshipped; though in day to day, she may not be treated equal nor protected by man and sometimes not even loved!

To fulfil her role, her body periodically produces ova, the egg, she conceives, gives birth, rears the child and then stops producing the egg for conception. Her body condition, when not properly handled, faces some problems of health connected with the above mentioned operations. This booklet is meant to indicate natural ways of dealing with those special problems of health i.e. those relating to i. menstruation, ii. pregnancy and birth, iii. breast

feeding, iv. vaginal and uterus conditions and v. menopausal, leucorrhoeal and miscellaneous conditions, without having recourse to drugs under various systems of medicine.

A question that arises is, why nature cure and how: In this connection Dr. Robert E.D. Duke in his book "Holistic Health" (New Horizon press, New Jersey) says:

"The Laws of Nature cure and heal, doctors don't. All a doctor can do is advise on how to speed up the process of getting well. Remember he or she cannot put new cells in the body, repair bones or sew together torn ligaments. Holistic healing, then, respects the body's ability to heal itself. The body can create the vital energy we all desire and seek. Diet, exercise and positive thinking are important, as is stress management and proper attention to the physical self, to the mind and the soul."

The gross body is made of the five elements of Aakash (ether) air, fire, water and earth. The imbalance of these elements is the main cause of disease. It consequently becomes imperative for living a healthy life that the daily programmes and activities are such that the balance of these elements continues to be restored in the body.

The human body is a perfect machine made self-sufficient by the creator. It has got computers to take decisions and chemical factories in the form of glands to produce chemicals etc. required for the proper working of this machine. The human body has primarily two systems i.e. defensive and reparative. These mechanisms for maintaining a constant environment are complex but beautifully co-ordinated. The skin, body flora e.g. bacteria of the mouth, traps of the nostrils, acidity of the stomach and R.E. Cells are some examples of the defence mechanism of the body. The secondary defences consist of the immune system, blood clotting system and the system which adjusts the body temperatures etc. Reparative system is illustrated by the wound healing process, clotting, cell multiplication, discarding of fibrinous tissues. These examples show that a master strategy exists for repairs and it can be skilfully and effectively executed by the system itself, if it is given opportunity and time to do so.

Each person is a unique individual, of unique heredity, unique environment, unique bio-chemical structure, and a unique mental background. Healthy living rules have to be tailored and modified to meet the requirements of each such unique individual! This individual must be actively and knowledgeably involved in designing a programme towards his healthy living.

Naturopathy offers cure for a whole person not for a particular disease only. Naturopathy believes that the body has the inherent ability to heal itself with the help of its vital force.

Elimination is extremely important for body health. If elimination becomes defective, the body would start eliminating through cold, cough, dysentry, diarrhoea or skin eruption. Enema, hip bath, spinal bath, mud bandage and deep breathing can restore strength to elimination processes of the body.

According to Naturopaths, germs do not cause disease. It is, instead, the disease which leads to germs. The aim of naturopathy is to cleanse the body, rebuild the person and teach him to live in harmony with his self and the environment. In this way, naturopathy becomes a way of life.

Under these circumstances, if the imbalance of the five elements is the main cause of this problem, that balance must first be restored in a natural way. Food is also the product of all the five elements of aakash (ether), air, fire (sun), water and earth. Food therapy would consequently seem to be the most appropriate way of restoring the balance of these elements by taking such food items which have more of that element, deficiency of which has caused the problem and vice versa. Aakash (ether) element is related to the life force i.e. the electrical energy which is passing through our body along known meridians. Imbalance of this element can be restored by acupressure. The imbalance of air can be corrected by exercise, of fire by harnessing the appropriate rays of the sun i.e. by colour therapy, of water by hydrotherapy and of earth by mud therapy.

Natural treatments do not produce results overnight. The imbalance of the elements was caused over a long period. The body cells are being constantly renewed. We have, therefore, to educate the

body and provide proper foods and other assistance under various therapies mentioned above, so that the balance gets restored in the shortest possible time.

In the midst of all these actions, please do not forget that the "Mind power" is really the main miracle element and the wonder food for all conditions and in all situations. Once you have faith in the Elements and in your ability to get over the problem, that faith alone will do more than half the trick. Gandhiji called this faith "Ram Naam", faith in Ram, i.e. in yourself!

Before dealing with the five body conditions of women, individually, let us take stock of how and why food therapy, hydrotherapy, acupressure etc. work.

Food has, from day one, influenced and even regulated the health of humans. The food, with its faults and failings and with its potential and power, continues to build the body structure. Food provides the building blocks. When a wall, made of brick and mortar, develops some faults, what is the best material for its repairs? Brick and mortar, of course! All faults and failings of the body built by food, will also have to be repaired with the brick and mortar of food. That food has to be a "live" food, food that has yet in it that "life force", the "pranas" of the vegetable kingdom. Enzymes and amino acids are some of the manifestations of that "life force" of those foods. These enzymes at 50°C (122°F) become sluggish and at a temperature of 55°C (131°F) all the enzymes are dead.

There is a certain programme of food which must be followed by every one as a minimum to remain healthy. Certain food habits must also be followed for this purpose. These are given below: certain special foods for overcoming various body conditions mentioned below, will be considered while dealing with those conditions.

### A MINIMUM PROGRAMME OF FOOD

Food, for easy assimilation, must not only be acceptable but tempting for you. Variety is also necessary for a nutritionally complete diet. If wrong tastes have been formed, those must be corrected gradually but soonest.

Food alone cannot provide absolute protection from all health problems. Your habits and style of life also play some part in determining the state of your health. By following the minimum programme of food outlined below, however, you increase very considerably, your chances of living a healthy life:

- i **Minimum Salt:** Salt is the greatest culprit. You get enough salt from vegetables, etc., in organic form. Reduce drastically the use of inorganic salts. Canned and preserved foods have lots of salt. Avoid these altogether.
- ii. **Minimum Sugar:** Sucrose, i.e., table sugar, has no nutrients except calories and carbohydrates. It produces acidity. For its digestion you need calcium which may have to be obtained from your bones, if inadequate in your diet. For sweetness use honey and other natural sugars like gur, dates etc to a certain extent. Reduce use of white sugar drastically.
- iii. **Minimum fat:** Intake of excessive fat is the main cause of two-thirds of your ailments. Reduce it drastically. Use only those oils which have a very high proportion of poly unsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, e.g.: sunflower oil, corn oil, etc. Try to delete fried foods from your diet altogether.
- iv. **No Smoking:**

Take the following food items, almost religiously, every day:

- i. Freshly crushed raw garlic 3-4 gms a day
- ii. Raw onions 20-25 gms a day
- iii. Raw salads with lettuce, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, brussel sprouts, radish, turnip, mustard, cucumber, etc. according to the season. 100-125 gms a day
- iv. Honey 2 teaspoons, a day
- v. Lemon 2 a day
- vi. Freshly extracted juice of fresh seasonal fruits or vegetables one glass a day within minutes of extraction.
- vii. Bran supplement (oat bran, wheat bran) 10 gms a day

**Gradually increase the proportion of the following foods in your diet:**

- i. Fresh seasonal fruits of the area.
- ii. Soybean, in some form or the other, i.e. tofu, tempeh, soy milk, nutrinuggets, soy powder, plain cooked soybeans or soybean sprouts. Include one of these in one meal on at least 4-5 days a week.
- iii. Carrot, spinach and all other vegetables which are yellow or orange in colour, or have green leaves high in chlorophyl.
- iv. Fruit and vegetable juices.
- v. Sprouts—sprouts of mung and alfalfa are easy to make and are very nutritious.

**Reduce the intake of the following foods:**

- i. Non-vegetarian foods. Try to stop the intake of all red meats altogether, immediately. Become a vegetarian. If you cannot become a pure vegetarian, then gradually reduce poultry and eggs also so that you take only light fish or seafood only on 1 or 2 days a week during the interim period.
- ii. Whole milk and its products. Take skimmed milk or up to 2% fat milk and their products instead. Better take yogurt thereof. Processed cheeses must be replaced by low fat cottage cheese.
- iii. Tea and coffee. Do not exceed 2 cups a day of conventional tea or coffee—decaffeinated, if possible. If you need more, try herbal teas.
- iv. White flour and its products. Replace these with whole grains, whole wheat or soya breads, unpolished rice etc.

**Water Intake:**

- i. Flush your system by taking water copiously.
- ii. Start the day with at least one glass of water which has stayed overnight in a utensil, preferably of copper.
- iii. No water within half an hour before a major meal or for two hours after such a meal.

**Food Habits**

Food which has not been cooked on fire has great importance for your health. Cooking plays havoc with enzymes and some

vitamins and minerals. Cooking should preferably be done in earthen ware or stone ware utensils. Enamelled vessels come next. Brass or copper vessels, which have been properly tinned may be a good third. Steaming, boiling and baking are acceptable forms of cooking. Roasting is bad, if the colour of the roasted thing changes. Frying is the worst. Cut the food just before cooking. Cook for the shortest time possible using a tight fitting lid. The Cooked foods should preferably go directly from the fire to the table. The strategy should be never to leave the food at temperatures between 5°C (41°F) and 63°C (145°F) when harmful bacteria can multiply rapidly, for more than 90 minutes at a time. While reheating the food, temperature of more than 75°C (167°F) must be reached to ensure that all harmful bacteria are killed.

Use sprouts and food stuffs grown locally. Eat the produce of the season. Sprouts provide a fountain of power. Develop a taste for leavened foods. These promote longevity. Use turmeric (haldi) extensively in your food. It has many curative properties. Eat juicy and bland foods. Eating less is good for health. More people die of over eating than undereating. Dose makes poison even out of good food.

Stop eating between meals. There are many benefits in taking food at fixed hours. Do not take food for one hour after moderate or severe exercise. Do not take a major meal till your appetite has grown well. 'A good meal ought to begin with hunger.'

Start eating with a relaxed state of mind. Pass urine and clean the bowels before a meal. If possible, have a stroll before the meal. Sit with friends and relatives and have a little chitchat with them. Wash your hands and face just before the meal. Squatting while eating is the best posture. Do not eat raw vegetables and raw fruits at the same time. Immediately after meals do not do work involving heavy labour.

Importance of water treatment for human health was known to Hippocrates in 500 BC. The book "common water, the best cure for fevers" was published by Mr. Hancock in 1723 AD. Dr. Bell of Paris is on record to say that in 1600 AD. 130,000 vapor baths were given in one single year by the Paris city hospitals to outside patients. No other element of nature, except air, is as important for sustaining life, as water. Hydrotherapy affords a thoroughly rational

method of treating various body conditions. This method is safe, can be relied upon and can be repeated without losing its effect.

Our body is held together by the "life force (prana), which is continuously recuperated by the body element aakaash(ether)". That life force moves along meridians, which are electrical pathways in our body, connecting various organs and glands, with endings in our hands, feet and some other parts of the body. As the arteries carry blood, so do these meridians carry electrical energy throughout the body. When this life force does not uninterruptedly flow to certain parts of the body, disease develops. The remedy lies under this system of acupressure in switching on the current to the affected parts by applying pressure at a corresponding point located in the body. Acupressure and acupuncture use the same points.

Sun provides one of the five body elements viz., fire. It is the source of all life on earth. Sunlight has been recognised as a powerful factor in building and maintaining health. The system of building health with the help of the sun and its rays, with different wavelengths in different colours, is known as chromotherapy or colourtherapy. Colour is a form of energy that produces physiological changes.

It is, thus, with the help of food therapy, exercise, hydrotherapy, acupressure, colourtherapy and mudtherapy that we try to restore the balance of the five element in our body in a natural way, and restore health and vigour

# **Menstruation**

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To know about Menstruation and its disorders, first let us try to understand the structure (anatomy) and function (physiology) of genital organs.

The female genital organs (genitalia) are broadly classified into external and internal genitalia. The external genitalia consists of vulva which includes Labia Majora, Labia Minora and the entrance to the vagina (Introitus). It also includes several other structures of less importance to us. Internal genitalia includes, uterus, the major reproductive organ, two fallopian tubes and two ovaries, the egg producing organ and the vagina commonly known as 'Birth Canal'. The uterus and vagina are held in position by several strong ligaments and muscles. The uterus and the vagina are in close connection with the urinary system i.e. bladder, ureters and uretra. The female generative organs lie in the bony pelvis. The functions of the female genital organs are collectively reproduction.

Menstruation consists of bleeding for three to five days. The menstrual cycle is controlled by hormones produced by pituitary

gland and ovaries. Ovaries produces estrogen and progesterone. The pituitary produces a follicle stimulating hormone and a luteinizing hormone. The former is related functionally to estrogen and the latter to progesterone. It is also greatly influenced by emotional and environmental factors which cause hormone imbalance and hence various menstrual problems.

There are various menstrual disorders such as Dysmenorrhoea, Premenstrual Tension (PMT), Amenorrhoea, Oligomenorrhoea, hypomenorrhoea, Menorrhagia, Dysfunctional Uterine Bleeding, Utero-vaginal Prolapse, Stress Incontinance etc.

**Dysmenorrhoea:** It is the term used for painful menstruation. During normal menstruation, discomfort and minimal pain are associated features due to congestion of pelvic tissues and release of prostaglandin. Primary Dysmenorrhoea is called spasmodic or functional while secondary Dysmenorrhoea is associated with some pathological condition. In spasmodic dysmenorrhoea the pain is 1-2 days before or 1-2 hours before the onset of menstruation and continues for 1-3 days, or even for all the five - six days & the severity will be more in any two days. Pain is colicky and cramplike, occurs in the lower abdominal region and radiates to the thighs. There may be low back ache. Constitutional symptoms like nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, giddiness are found. Primary dysmenorrhoea may disappear after marriage & child birth. Secondary Dysmenorrhoeas is related to pelvic lesions eg. endometriosis, chronic pelvic inflammation, uterine fibroid, intrauterine contraceptive devices (IUCD), cervical stenosis etc.

**Amenorrhoea:** This is the symptom of absence of menstruation. It could be either pathological or functional. Some of the pathological causes are diseases of hypothalamus, pituitary, thyroid or adrenal glands, ovarian disorders, congenital disorders of genital organs and chromosomal abnormalities. Some neurogenic factors like injury or disorders of the mind-brain, meningitis, epilepsy can cause primary amenorrhoea. Extreme undernutrition and ill health is an important cause of primary amenorrhoea. Malabsorption syndrome work through poor nutrition. As already mentioned emotional and environmental factors have enormous influence on menstruation. Extreme degrees of anxiety, stress, strains, sudden change of environments can result in cessation of menstruation for prolonged periods.

**Premenstrual Tension (PMT):** It is a state in which some women suffer from excessive pre-menstrual symptoms during seven to ten days before the onset of menstruation. This is another disabling condition. The cyclical hormone production in the body has tremendous effects on mood or the mental state of each person. This can be exaggerated by stresses and strains of our day to day pattern of civilized life style and thus precipitation of this symptom. These symptoms like irritability, depression, anxiety, fear of varying degrees, lassitude, headache, sleeplessness, nausea, constipation, diarrhoea, gain in weight, oedema of the legs, painful breasts which become tender and lumpy, low-sugar level in blood develops in some. These symptoms are relieved by the onset of menstruation. In some cases it may be so severe as to cause marital disharmony to suicidal tendencies.

**Oligomenorrhoea:** This means infrequent menses at intervals longer than 35 days. It has the same aetiological significance as that of amenorrhoea.

**Hypomenorrhoea:** This means scanty menstrual less in duration and amount - Hypomenorrhoea occurring regularly can be non-pathological Hypomenorrhoea with infrequent menses needs investigation and treatment like that of amenorrhoea. Taking of oral contraceptive pill may also cause hypomenorrhoea.

**Menorrhagia:** This means excessive menstrual loss in amount or duration or both. In popular term, this is heavy menstruation. There are many causes like uterine fibroid, pelvic inflammatory disease, chronic endometritis, prolapse of the ovaries, ovarian tumour, some cases of intrauterine contraceptive device (IUCD), some cases of chronic hypertension, chronic nephritis, under nutrition, anaemia, emotional disturbances like worry, sorrow, sexual excesses, durgs, prolonged taking of aspirin etc.

**Dysfunctional Uterine Bleeding (DUB):** Is defined as abnormal uterine bleeding not due to any organic gynaecological disease. It is attributed to the imbalance in cyclical sex hormone production. It can result in irregular menstrual cycles, excessive or prolonged bleeding. This forms a major percentage of gynaecological disease.

Through Naturopathy and Yoga most of the diseases can be cured. As already discussed, number of disorders are caused due

to wrong way of living and due to psychological stress and strain. As these can be confused with pathological conditions, an initial thorough gynaecological checkup is necessary to properly select the method of treatment and by avoiding unnecessary and dangerous operative and drug therapy.

In Naturopathy all diseases caused are said to be the accumulation of morbid matter due to wrong life style, i.e. violating natural laws in eating, sleeping, drinking etc. This leads to malabsorption and diseases. So, the treatment is holistic in its approach. It covers all the aspects of health, i.e. preventive, curative and promotive. It tries to tackle the cause to give sure cure for any disorder.

In prevention of all the menstrual disorders one should keep in mind that the eating, sleeping and other habits should be natural. Wrong diet like too much of spices, artificial foods - soft drinks, tinned foods, fries etc., lack of exercises, lack of health and sex education, lack of emotional balance etc. play a major role. Hence, natural foods like vegetables, fruits, sprouts, natural juices and soups, wholesome grains, drinking adequate plain water about 2-3 litres, proper exercises, living in natural environment are the essential factors for the prevention of the disorders. Steam bath, massages, swimming are the positive preventive treatments for general tone up of the body.

Diet plays an important role in curing all the menstrual disorders. As earlier mentioned in the preventive aspects, natural food is very essential. Menstrual disorders are created by the diet which is deficient in vital nutrients and there is excessive loss of iron, potassium, calcium and vitamin B. Should avoid fried, maida products, coffee, tea in excess, soft drinks, fats, non-vegetarian, processed and tinned foods etc because these foods lead to malabsorption and lead to a number of disorders. Instead substitute with **fresh, seasonal fruits, vegetable salads, whole wheat bread (Roti), wholesome grains & pulses sprouted dried and made into flour etc.** Sprouts raw/steamed of green gram (moong), bengal gram (Chana), alpha alpha, til (sesame), groundnuts are good. One can have also the milk of til (sesame) and groundnut by soaking it overnight & extracting the milk (raw) and taken by adding 2 tsp of honey or little jaggery syrup. It is very good to regulate menstruation & helps to balance the weight. It should be taken on empty stomach instead of with breakfast.

Dietary fibre is an important factor for keeping away constipation, & malabsorption. One should drink lot of plain water though avoiding it with the meals. Water is a very essential factor to keep the blood circulation in good condition & for aiding absorption & assimilation of nutrients and for proper elimination. Salt intake should be reduced. Too cold & too hot items are also not good. Using of ginger, garlic, ajwain, cloves in diet in minimum quantity will be beneficial. If one has heavy and painful menstruation, quantity of diet should be reduced during the menstrual cycle. If problem is severe, even short fasting (2-3 days) with lot of juices & soups (not in large quantity at a stretch) is advisable. Using lot of green leafy vegetables is the best way of keeping a balance of minerals & salts. Wheat grass juice is highly recommended. It could be taken daily for one month continuously and then twice weekly according to feasibility.

Some of the natural beverages which give good relief from pain & regulate menstruation are recommended. One can have any one or two of the following types at a time regularly.

- (a) Jeera (Cumin seeds) teaspoonfull boiled in 250 ml. of water for 5mts & strained. Add a little jaggery & take lukewarm twice a day on empty stomach not immediately after meals.
- (b) Sounf (Aniseeds) 1-2 tsp with equal amount of jaggery boiled in water for 5 mts, strained. Drink lukewarm twice a day.
- (c) Mint leaves chutnis are good and also one can boil raw juice of the mint leaves with little jaggery or little salt added to it and taken twice a day.
- (d) Buttermilk diluted twice a day adding curry leaves/coriander leaves/mint leaves with little ginger/garlic/jeera.
- (e) Adding little pepper and turmeric to lukewarm milk to be taken at night instead of dinner gives a good relief from pain.
- (f) Drinking Honey water (2 tsp) in 250-300 ml. of cold/lukewarm water.
- (g) Jaljeera is also good preferably prepared from fresh leaves of mint, jeera, tamarind, jaggery etc. but not in too cold water.
- (h) Raw mangoes to be boiled for 10-15 mts, take out the pulp &

mix with the same boiled water adding little jaggery, pinch of salt & jeera powder to give good appetising and laxative effect (100-200 ml).

Following foods help in irregular, delayed, and scanty menstruation:

- i) Thyme (H.Ajwain) herbal tea: It helps in these situations. It increases the flow of menstruation. For menstrual pains, besides the tea, make a poultice of ground seeds of thyme and apply externally.
- ii) Beet root syrup: Fresh beets may be boiled until they are very soft. Remove the beets but boil the liquid till it becomes syrup. Drink a cup of this liquid twice a day. It is a remedy for delayed menstruation.
- iii) Mustard: Dissolve paste of two tea spoons of mustard powder in the bath water and soaking in this hot mustard bath is likely to bring on menstruation.

At the curative level hydrotherapy, diettherapy, mud, sun - colour therapies, yogic therapy, help to combat the disorders on the whole. Other supplementary therapy acupressure etc. also help when applied holistically.

**Hydrotherapy:** (Water - treatment) water is considered as a valuable therapeutic agent because of its three most important and remarkable properties which are (1) Its great power for absorbing and communicating heat. (2) Its solvent properties (3) Its physical state can be easily changed from solid to liquid or from liquid to gaseous form.

The skin is reflexly connected with the internal organs of the body, through the nerve centres. Whatever effect is produced upon the skin by the application of water, is likewise produced in the internal vascular area associated with it. Any sort of irritation of the cutaneous nerves which gives rise to contraction of the blood vessels of the surface, likewise causes contraction of the small blood vessels of the interior of the body.

The mechanical effect of the application of water is the reverse of reflex effect. When the blood vessels of the skin are made to

contract as a result of the application of an irritant, the blood rushes into the internal organs, causing the mechanical distension of the internal part.

Application of warm water to the skin produces dilatation of the surface vessels & contraction of the vessels of the brain while cold water produces contraction of the vessels of the skin with dilatation of the cerebral vessels.

Application of cold water or ice produces coldness of the skin due to contraction of small blood vessels. But, prolonged and constant application of ice is to be avoided.

Application of hot water produces different types of effects depending upon mode of application. Heat dilates small veins and stimulates the activity of the glands of the skin. The alternate hot & cold water application to the skin is the most efficient way of stimulating nutritive changes without creating the thermic disturbances in the body.

Hence, the above therapeutic aspects of water is helpful in all the conditions of diseases, only the mode, method, temperature of the application differs accordingly. The application of water treatments can be done sparingly to all aspects of health viz; prevention, cure & promotion. Cold hip bath, hot and cold hip bath can be taken as routine treatment to help all conditions of disease except during the menstruation. Cold packs are helpful before & during the menstrual cycle. Hot hip bath is helpful where there is scanty bleeding associated with pain and it should be taken a week before the periods till one gets the menstrual cycle and not during the periods. Abdominal pack is also very beneficial for all the times (before, during & after M/C). Warm water enema is very necessary to clean the bowels & to be congestion free. It is very beneficial when given in dysmenorrhoea & oligomenorrhoea conditions. In dysfunctional Uterine bleeding cases enema can be given as preventive treatment. Neutral water spinal bath is beneficial in cases of PMT. It reduces the irritability, anxiety, depression etc. Vaginal douche with luke warm neem water (neem leaves boiled in water & cooled) is good in cases of dysmenorrhoea, oligomannorrhoea, PMT, amenorrhoea, Leucorrhoea, pruritis. It has to be taken once a week in mild cases and on alternate days for two weeks otherwise. It is important here to note that it has to be taken before the onset

of menstruation & not after that for atleast a week. It should also be avoided in young virgins, where only external wash with neem water twice a day is sufficient. Panties other than cotton to be avoided strictly & also use of panties to be avoided at night & care of hygiene is very necessary.

**Mud Therapy:** Cold-Mud-Packs applied on the lower abdominal region for 10-20 mts are helpful. Fermentation on lower abdomen for 3-5 mts before applying mudpack in dysmenorrhoea, and amenorrhoea cases is very effective. The cold mudpack has the same effect on the body as cold packs mentioned earlier but the degree of the benefit is more because mud can retain the moisture at any temperature for prolonged period.

**Massage:** It is very beneficial to tone up the body. It improves stamina, circulation, elimination. It helps in relieving the congestion, strengthens the muscles to reduce the pain. During menstruation massage to thighs, hips & back can be given in case of dysmenorrhoea & amenorrhoea & to be avoided in menorrhagea cases. Massage on the lower abdomen done very lightly anticlockwise is beneficial. Abrupt rubbing on the body or putting some medicinal oil is not safe.

**Acupressure:** Dr. Bill E Prentice in "physician and sports Medicine" of March 1981 says, "An acupressure massage on the back is the best treatment for a woman in the throes of painful cramps. Rubbing a tender area located about an inch (2.5 cm) to the right of the spine about mid back will reduce pain after 30 seconds. The pain will completely subside after 3 or 4 more minutes of massage. This treatment usually relieves menstrual cramps for three to six hours".

For help in menstruation problems, one acupressure point is on the lower abdomen, about 3 cms below the belly button. Press gradually inward with the palm of the hand. Another point is located on the inside of the legs, a little above the ankles. The efficacy of the latter point is confirmed by M. Martin, an athletic trainer from the University of South Carolina, Columbia who uses acupressure to relieve menstrual cramps in athletes. According to her "find a tender spot about midway between the ankle bone and the Achilles tendon and apply gentle pressure with the thumb".

Pressure bought to bear on the thumbs and the first and second fingers of both the hands can bring relief from menstrual cramps.

Another pressure point is located about 5 cms (2 inches) above the knee cap. Press hard and inward with one thumb, for reducing menstrual pain.

The following exercise is strongly recommended. It will relax muscles in the pelvic region and tone up the abdominal area also:

Lie flat on your back. Bring the feet nearer the thighs, thus raising the knees, the feet remaining flatly on the ground: Now:

- i) Attempt Mula Bandha by contracting the region between the anus and the scrotum. Now press the portion between the first and the tenth vertebra against the ground. Keep it like that for about ten seconds. Then let go for five seconds. Repeat this five times.
- ii) Thereafter, while keeping the knees raised, raise the portion between the first and the tenth vertebra up from the ground in the form of a small concave, while keeping the rest of the body on the ground. Keep it up for about ten seconds. Then let go for five seconds. Repeat this five times.
- iii) Do as at (i) above, then hold one leg at the knee (not at the calf) with both your hands and bring the knee up with thigh touching your chest. Keep it like that for about ten seconds. Then let it go. Hold the other leg at the knee and bring that knee up to touch the chest. Keep it like that for about ten seconds. Repeat once again for both the legs.
- iv) Repeat (ii) above five times. Thereafter rest for about 30 seconds before getting up.

**Exercises and Yoga therapy are very essential aspects of treatment.** Exercises/walking/swimming promotes good circulation & flexibility and relieves pelvic congestion. Yoga therapy in general theme includes relaxation technique, developing an inner awareness, improving general stamina and specific postures to improve the strength and tone of muscles concerned. It also helps in neuro-muscular co-ordination, proper functioning of glandular system etc. Yogic concepts help to bring an equipoise and calm state of mind. Through meditation one can improve the intellectual faculty by

calming down the mind so that all the above said treatments, diet control can be easily accepted without any inhibition, wrong notion etc. It is also important since there is a need for life style changes which is made easier by yogic concepts and practices. By Bhakti Yoga, there is emotional balance in women and make them much more strong, confident, & self reliant. So, Naturopathy & Yoga should go together for better, sure results as they are two sides of the same coin.

Yogasanas can provide lot of relaxation besides massaging and toning important parts of the body. In one study, reported in the Physical Fitness Research Digest of USA-July 1978, eight weeks of Vajrasana (thunderbolt pose) i.e. bent knee sit ups, "done on a daily basis were found to make life much easier during the menstrual pains period for 36 college women". Vajrasana (virasana) Sarvangasana, Paschmottanasana, urdhava dhanurasana help considerably during menses and so does nadi shodhak pranayam.

# Pregnancy and Birth

**Dr. Mrs. R.K. Narula, Prof. of Gynaecology**

Mother power is worshipped in many countries of the world. Man only provides the sperm. It is the mother who provides everything else to give birth to that loved creature, your child! The whole process of conceiving and delivering a child is the most natural of all processes. It is, however, so different with every woman that all problems associated with this process must be referred to a doctor or a qualified midwife for advice. This chapter provides only briefly some basic guidelines for pre and post natal care.

Pregnancy can last from 36 to 41 weeks. At an average, a pregnancy takes about 10 lunar months. Only about 4 per cent of the babies are, however, born on the expected due date. Do not be upset so long as your loved one does not arrive before 36 weeks or after 41 weeks, both extremes being considered normal.

Pregnancy is the period for gaining weight. In the first three months you gain one or two kilograms (about 2 or 4 lbs). Later, the gain could be approximately half a kilogram a week. The total

gain should not be less than 7 kgs. (15 lbs) and not more than 14 kgs (30 lbs). Generally you get back to your normal weight within one year.

Missed periods, breast changes, nausea, morning sickness, increased frequency of micturition, fatigue are some of the early signs of pregnancy.

A normal healthy body has a greater detoxifying process working during the night. If toxins are not taken care of at night, these make the pregnant women sick the next morning. Vitamin B6 especially helps in such detoxifying process. Foods rich in this vitamin are important for avoiding morning sickness. Those suffering from morning sickness during pregnancy should keep a banana or biscuits, cookies, crackers or dry toast by their bed side and eat the same before sitting up in the morning i.e. while still lying in bed. This is likely to defeat nausea. Avoid greasy, fried or spicy foods. Get up slowly, avoiding sudden movements. Iron supplements can be left out during this period of morning sickness since they may contribute to an upset stomach. Cases of morning sickness may also be cured by the use of rubber bands applied on the thumbs and the index fingers and by applying pressure on the webs between those fingers. During this period drink liquids between the meals and not with the meals. Eating small meals also helps. Gowen recommends raw peeled almonds as a snack during this period. To some women sipping carbonated water provides relief. Yam or sweet potatoes also help in this condition and so does chamomile herbal tea, taken in the mornings. Do not take any medication. Talk to other women who have suffered from morning sickness. Once you know it will go way, you come to terms with it. Morning sickness starts in the sixth week and stops after 3 months. **Wataru Chashi** of the Chashi Institute of New York City prescribes a daily all over massage as a preventive measure. Massaging the entire neck and stretching of the head away from shoulders is specially helpful.

According to the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, 1985, moderate exercise, during pregnancy, may reduce the chance of having a miscarriage or a premature baby. Exercise strengthens the pelvic and abdominal muscles which help make the birth easier. Regular exercise during pregnancy is essential. Walking is the best exercise in that body condition. Brisk and strenuous exercise should be avoided.

A woman should not work full time after the 30th week of pregnancy. During the last three months the heart is working 33% harder than normal. It needs some relief. Avoid high healed shoes in pregnancy because they shift the body weight forward, thus placing additional strain on the spine and back. Avoid prolonged sitting. Get up slowly after lying down. During pregnancy you need 9 to 10 hours of sleep. Try to lie down on your left side with your knees bent inwards. Mid-day rest is the answer to fatigue in early pregnancy. Do not tie undergarments tight about the waist. Link has been established between fetal anomalies, childhood malignancies and X-Ray examination during early pregnancy. X-Ray examinations must therefore be avoided. Exposure to smoking, active or passive, must also be avoided. Such an exposure could lead to even a still-birth

During pregnancy, the presence of breast milk is no cause for alarm. Wash away any dried milk with warm water so that your nipples do not become itchy, irritated or sore.

There are occasions when faintness comes while lying on your back. It only means that the uterus has fallen against the main blood vessels at the front of your spine and has interfered with enough circulation to those vessels. The drop in circulation makes you faint. Solution is very simple. Lie on your side and not on your back. The weight of the uterus shifts and normal circulation is restored.

Proper nutrition is very important for a good pregnancy. It was in 1941 that evidence was provided for the influence of pre-natal diet on the health of the new born infant. During pregnancy, iron, vitamin C and calcium are required in larger quantities. Take food rich in these minerals and vitamin C. Milk and milk products are good, fruits and vegetable juices may also be taken. Vitamin C may, however, have to be taken as an added insurance only when recommended by a doctor. Drink lots of fluids. Do not restrict salt too much during pregnancy unless so directed by the doctor. You may have to add 15 to 20% to your calories because of the pregnancy. Iron rich foods may be necessary to keep red blood cells properly oxygenated. 500 to 1000 mg. of extra calcium is also necessary. Muscle cramps are generally due to insufficient calcium intake or insufficient exercise. Smoking, alcohol and even strong drugs, must be avoided. Bananas are reported to improve the



complexion of the child and parched gram and almonds during pregnancy add to the intellect of the child. Intake of milk and pulses is very necessary during pregnancy. These have high food value. Vitamin C and bioflavonoids (also called Vitamin P) when taken regularly during pregnancy, reduce the risk of abortion considerably even in habitual cases. Vitamins C and P make the pregnancy very easy. These vitamins are contained in the white underskin and the segment parts of the citrus fruit and not so much in its juice. Lemon, grape, plum, grapefruit, apricot and cherry contain vitamin P. Avoid vitamin supplements. Draw vitamins and minerals from natural foods.

Folic acid (Vitamin B family) is very important for easy pregnancy. It abounds in fresh vegetables, legumes, milk, egg and brewer's yeast. 75% of this is lost in cooking lasting more than 15 minutes. Large volume of research shows that anti biotics can cause folic acid deficiency. Birth control pills also cause folic acid and vitamin B 6 deficiencies. It is, therefore, desirable to get on a programme of good nutrition before getting pregnant. British Medical Journal reports on how folic acid was given to a group of women who had delivered malformed babies in previous pregnancies and with folic acid, the incidence of deformity was reduced considerably. W.H.O. estimate that outside U.S.A. one third of all pregnant women in the world have folic acid deficiency.

Following special foods help during pregnancy:

1. Roasted peanuts with jaggery (Gur) and cow or goat milk help considerably.
2. Thyme and its tea, in cases of normal births, speed up delivery and make it easy.
3. Four or five grams of dry ginger with liquorice (Mulathi) taken with milk at night would reduce the risk of abortion.
4. Molasses, parsley and amaranth taken during pregnancy ensure easy confinement and a healthy child.
5. Vitamin E supplements of i.u. 400 help in cramps during pregnancy. These supplements are not recommended as a routine.

Craving for clay or chalk etc. during pregnancy should be curbed. Giving boiled beans with sugar helps in this. Drinking a large

draught of cold water and sometimes even licking of a little honey help to curb this craving (American Medical Association 'Book of Women Care' page 89).

In later stages of pregnancy, caffeine is not excreted from a woman's body. This retained caffeine reaches the fetus and excessive use could be harmful. In the last 3 months tea coffee and other caffeine drinks must be restricted.

Dr. M. Stoppard in her "Every Woman's Medical Handbook" deals with various pregnancy problems as under:

- 1. Abdominal pain:** There could be so many causes of abdominal pain in pregnancy. A hot water bottle or heating pad will generally relax muscles. Do not take pain killers. If pain is severe or persistent, please consult your doctor.
- 2. Backache:** Concentrate on good posture. Watch your footwear. Check your mattress. Exercise to strengthen the spine. If the baby is in the occipite posterior position, get down on all fours to take the pressure off the back.
- 3. Constipation:** Take plenty of dietary fiber and lots of fluids. Regular exercise, no laxatives, dried fruits and bran are indicated.
- 4. Cramps:** Massage the affected part firmly. For leg cramps, flex your feet hard, pushing your heels away from you.
- 5. Cravings:** Eat whatever you feel like but no fattening things.
- 6. Fainting:** If you feel faint, lie down with your feet slightly elevated. Avoid standing for long periods and do not rush around.
- 7. Flatulence:** Avoid fried foods. Peppermint and hot milk drinks may help. Try not to gulp air. Chewing gum causes you to take in air.
- 8. Fluid retention:** If there is swelling of feet, rest with your legs up and avoid standing. Avoid salty foods.
- 9. Heart burn:** Avoid tatty foods and acidic fruits. Have a hot milk drink before going to bed. Raise the head end of the bed to prevent reflux. Try not to take antacids.
- 10. hemorrhoids:** Eat a high fiber diet to keep your stools soft and easy to pass. If the hemorrhoids itch, apply soothing cream or ice

packs. Don't have hot bath.

**11. Insomnia:** Wear natural fabrics in bed to avoid overheating at night. No sedatives. Loose and light clothing, a hot drink or an unexciting book could also help.

**12. Rashes:** Keep yourself clean and well dried. Apply talcum powder to folds of skin.

**13. Rib pain:** Prop yourself up so that the ribs are not compressed. The pain will disappear when the baby drops into the pelvic cavity.

**14. Sweating:** Wear light natural fibers and don't exert too much.

**15. Vaginal discharge:** Wear a panty liner for comfort. See your doctor if you notice any brown or irritating discharge.

**16. Edema,** Headache, blurring of vision, and watery discharges need urgent medical advice

If you are mentally and physically relaxed, child birth will be less painful. Try to urinate as soon as possible after delivery. You may need to urinate frequently in the first few days. This is the way your body eliminates any excess fluids. Do not worry about your first bowel motion. This does not normally occur for about two days after delivery. Breast feeding may be associated with pains when uterus contracts to pre pregnancy size. Start exercises even before you get out of bed. To strengthen your abdominals, lie on the bed, with your knees and your hands flat on your stomach. Squeeze buttocks together and press your back into the bed.

Baby's feelings during the first few minutes of its life are very important! Upon delivery, place the new born on the mother's abdomen to reassure it that the environment is warm and friendly. Caressing and touching of its back by the parents will relay the love and affection to the baby. In the first few days rock the baby often. It has lived in a moving environment for nine months. The stillness after birth frightens it. Carry it around in order to soothe its body panic.

Question of regaining your figure after delivery is very important for you. During the pregnancy, stretch marks in the shape of wavy strips appear on the abdomen, thighs and sometimes even on breasts. This is mainly due to rapid and excessive weight gain.

**Watch your weight.** Do not gain more than 10 Kgs (22 lbs) if you want to get back to your original weight afterwards. Simultaneously continue to massage the vulnerable parts of your body with oil. Moreover, from the seventh month when breasts begin to enlarge, use nursing bras and wear them day and night.

# Breast Feeding

**Dr. B. Venkat Rao**

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Breast milk is individualised for each child. Raw materials for the production of that milk are selected from the blood stream of the mother, according to the needs of the child. Breast milk provides protection against respiratory and intestinal infections. The first milk, the colostrum, contains important antibodies that protect the child against various infections. Breast feeding should preferably be started in the first hour of life. Dr. A.S. Goldman of the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston says, "It is already widely accepted that human milk is rich in factors that protect directly against infection, but we found evidence that it contains at least one factor that activates the baby's own immune system". The first feed should be breast milk. Thereafter baby should be fed on demand, and not by the hour.

Breast milk is more easily digestible. It is always ready to drink and uncontaminated. Its protein is more nutritious and digestible than cow's milk protein. Mother's milk has a higher level of zinc which is important for a strong immune system of the child. It prevents constipation and lowers the incidence of food allergies.

Breast fed infants use their calories more economically. When the baby suckles, the hormone oxytocin is released from the pituitary gland. It helps the uterus to contract efficiently and post delivery bleeding decreases. It also helps to spout out milk right away. Release of another hormone prolactin from the same gland gives the feeding mother a feeling of relaxation. It causes the production of milk. Suckling stimulates both these hormones. Weight control becomes easy because you burn almost a thousand calories for every litre of milk you feed. More important than all the above benefits of breast feeding are the physical and emotional bonds of the most intimate nature created between the mother and the child by that skin to skin and eye to eye contact between the two.

If the mother does not feed the baby often enough, the undrunk milk distends the milk glands, preventing further milk production. If the breast gets infected, feed the baby more often from the infected breast. Not only will it not harm the baby, it will remove the infection more quickly. While breast feeding, the mother should sit in a chair with a low seat and high back. That way the baby's weight will be supported on the knees. If the mother becomes extremely angry while feeding, the milk becomes poisonous and unfit for feeding. It can cause violent convulsions to the child. Sexual intercourse, within six hours before feeding, often causes stomach trouble to the child because the excitement introduces damaging chemicals into the milk. For the breast milk to have healthy effect on the child, it is necessary that bowels of the mother are normal and she is calm and in a good mood while feeding. Every body should be kept away when you are feedings. That the mother and child are left alone to interact more intimately.

### **Care of the breasts:**

Within 2 to 4 days of the childbirth, because of the increased blood supply to the breasts and because of the pressure of the newly produced milk, the breast tissues get swollen. In such cases have frequent feedings. Apply mild moist heat to the breasts for about 20 minutes before feeding. During feeding, have a mild massage of the breast towards the nipple to get the milk flowing.

In case of sore or hard breasts or where the breasts get swollen or caked, see that the child does not suck one breast for more than

12 minutes because ordinarily the child should be able to empty one breast in less than 7 minutes. Over sucking will make it more sore. Nurse on the less sore side first. After feeding, prepare pancakes of wheat flour, baking soda and sour milk and apply hot pancakes to cover the affected part. Each pancake should be big enough to cover the entire affected area. Change them often enough and reheat them so that the fermentation is complete. Alternatively, bake large potatoes, crush them and put the soft potato pulp in a woollen cloth and apply to the breast as hot as can be tolerated. Continue for 15-20 minutes. At the end of a feed, don't break the suction by pulling away. Rather, insert your finger into your baby's mouth and then gently ease him or her off the breast by pressing down on the chin. The whole of the nipple and aerola should be in the mouth, not just the nipple itself. Baby should suck energetically.

To guard against getting sore nipple, during the last one or two months of pregnancy, rub breasts and nipples firmly with a towel. Roll the nipples between your fingers and apply a little oil. This abrasive technique at that time will save you from lot of trouble later on. Do not wash sore nipples with soap etc. That washes away their natural protection. Use of soap can defat the skin and cause unnecessary cracking. Between feeds, nipples should remain dry. Expose them to air and sunlight. During feeding, change nursing position often so as to change the pressure of the child's mouth on different sides of the nipple.

After nursing, apply molasses on the nipple. This treatment will never fail you. The other cure is to apply jelly made with the seed and white matter at the centre of quince (H.Behi). Soak the seeds in a little hot water. Strain off seeds before it becomes too thick. Apply that Jelly. You may avoid cracks if you apply a little olive or peanut oil as often as you remember and certainly after feeding.

Supplement of bone meal and dolomite tablets (consisting of calcium and magnesium) taken before periods may relieve painful breasts. Continue breast feeding for six months at least. Knowledgeable persons recommend breast feeding for one year. In Indian villages, some mothers breast feed their children for even two years.

#### **Diet Care:**

Following foods may be tried for increasing milk flow of a nursing mother:

- i. Fenugreek seeds (H. Methi): A gruel of these seeds will increase the breast milk of nursing mothers.
- ii. Alfalfa: It also increases flow of milk in nursing mothers. It could be taken as sprouts, tea or juice of fresh alfalfa leaves with carrot juice or other organic drink.
- iii. Musk melon: with its combination of calcium, potassium and sodium it stimulates milk production in nursing mothers.
- iv. Raw papaya is eaten as a curry by women to stimulate secretion of breast milk.
- v. Whole potatoes, baked or roasted in their skins, help nursing mothers to provide more breast milk to the infants.
- vi. Black gram dhal (H. Urad dhal) as also parsley and amaranth increase the secretion of breast milk. Dhal should generally be taken in the mornings.
- vii. The leaves or seeds of fennel (H. Kala Jeera) boiled in barley water and drunk, are good for increasing the breast milk.
- viii. An admixture made with anise seed (H. sonf) taken on empty stomach, increases both the quality and the quantity of breast milk.
- ix. Milk of ground nuts extracted by wet crushing of ground nuts which have been soaked previously for 24 hours. It should be diluted before being given to the mother.
- x. Diluted grass juice. Nothing else to be consumed by her for at least two hours thereafter to help assimilation.

After child birth, massage of the breasts with almond oil, olive oil or peanut oil, keeps the breasts in good shape.

American Folk Medicine by Clarence Meyer says "sage tea given in cold infusion will, within a few days, cause the milk to leave the breasts". This is, then the way to stop producing breast milk, when so considered necessary. If breast feeding is stopped suddenly, your body will stop creating the hormones and milk production will taper off. For this reason if you need to stop breast feeding temporarily, you should keep expressing milk manually so that the production continues. Working women should expel some milk at place of work when they cannot hold it any more. On reaching home, expel a little milk, wash the breasts and then feed the baby.

Some times a duct can become blocked. You will then find a lumpy area in one segment of the breast that doesn't go away after breast feeding. Treat it with hot soak and massage.

If your breasts sag or are small, develop the pectoral muscles. That will make the breasts seem larger and firmer. To accomplish this, Maggie's "Woman's Book" prescribes the following exercise:

"Lie on your bed. Rest the upper arm on the bed and bend the elbow so that the hand is straight in the air. Pick up your elbow and swing your arms in and down towards your thighs; circle them back up. Start making small circles, working slowly towards your thighs and back up; then circle in the other direction. Repeat this exercise in each direction a few times. Now, find the position where you feel the muscle is working most and work there. To trim down or to keep in shape, do just a few circles each day with light weights in hands."

According to Dr. B. Vijayalakshmi, the renowned naturopath, "general health of the mother should be taken care of right from the beginning. After all all the systems in body are inter related. No particular system can be dealt with independently. Proper balanced diet containing more fruits and vegetables, regular exercise preferably walking during pregnancy and yogic exercises after delivery are essential to keep the breasts in proper functioning state and in good shape. The mother should be educated about general hygiene before the delivery itself. Last, but not least is the importance of a relaxed mind to keep the milk flowing for at least six months both for the welfare of the child and the mother. A tensed "mind stops the flow of the milk immediately"

# **Vaginitis**

**Dr. B. Venkat Rao**

Vaginitis involves inflammation and irritation of the vaginal tissues. It is often accompanied by a copious and foul smelling discharge. One third of all women suffer from vaginal irritation once or twice every year. Vaginitis is generally caused during the hot and the humid part of the year. It can be caused by hormonal deficiencies, infection, improper cleaning habits, allergies to soaps, vaginal sprays, repeated douching and perfumed toilet tissue. Emotional upsets can change the chemical balance of the vagina and may thus cause vaginitis. Use of oral contraceptives or just a cyclic surge of estrogens preceding the menses can cause such an abnormal secretion from the vagina. Use of antibiotics destroys good bacteria also and can cause vaginitis. Vitamin B deficiency and intestinal worms can be other causes. It is more common among women who are overweight.

Not all vaginal discharge is abnormal. The glands in uterus, vagina and cervix produce their own secretions. If a discharge is not irritating or foul smelling and is clear in colour, it is probably normal. During child bearing years, the vagina is kept clean and moist by a fluid which maintains a balance of bacteria in a weak acid environment. This fluid increases during intercourse, pregnan-

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cy and at the time of ovulation. Urine and semen both are sterile and do not present any threat to the vaginal health. But bowel movement does. Women should always wipe their anus from front to back. Vaginal infection can, in severe cases, spread to the pelvic organs and even lead to infertility. Vaginal odour is usually due to the retention of the discharge by the pubic hair. Wash that away. Hair removal is a cosmetic decision and not a health matter.

Symptoms of vaginitis besides irritation and inflammation consist of discharge and odour. Other symptoms could even be involuntary closing of the vagina to prevent penetration (vaginismus) and dryness of the vagina making penetration very painful.

To control vaginitis it is necessary to keep the vaginal area absolutely dry and clean. Practice good hygiene. Do not remain in swimming gear for long periods. Avoid wet clothing, especially wet under garments. Cotton garments should be in greater use so that the moisture and even discharge is effectively absorbed. Tight fitting clothes should be avoided so that there is proper ventilation of the body and air can circulate freely. Do not keep the vulva wrapped up all day. Bacteria thrive in a warm, moist climate. Adequate air circulation keeps the lips of the vagina dry and deprives the bacteria of the moisture they need to grow. Keep the vulva as dry as possible.

Avoid even routine douching. Preferred hygiene is plain soap and water. If there is small irritation a mini douche with one teaspoon of vinegar with a glass of water could be given two or three times a day. It is like gargling with hot salt water in case of minor sore throat. Vinegar is likely to increase the acidity of the vagina and restore the natural resistance of the organ.

Bacterial infection prospers on iron. No iron supplements should, consequently be taken until you are healed of this condition.

To ensure that emotional upsets do not aggravate vaginitis, look at your sexual relationship and see if there is disharmony somewhere. Look at the style of pre love making. Talk with your partner.

Use of garlic can help considerably in such a situation. Besides taking garlic by mouth, add one tea spoon of fresh garlic juice to water and douche. If the juice is fresh, it will play havoc with bacteria in that region. Use of olive oil, fiber particularly oat bran

and unprocessed carbohydrates cut down on yeast infection and interfere with fungus conversion. Use unsaturated fatty acids only. Supplements of vitamin B complex and vitamin E help in tackling the situation effectively.

Many nutritionists prescribe a local application of yogurt for a localised infection. Douche with plain sweet yogurt. Its healthy bacteria will eventually overcome the bacteria which is creating the problem. If necessary, add a tea spoon of fresh garlic juice also to the yogurt before douching.

Another effective way of tackling the problem is to sit in a hip bath where vinegar or apple cider vinegar have been added to the water. Spread legs apart so that the water can easily flow into the vagina for douching.

Following foods may help in this condition:

- i. Yarrow herbal tea helps in the disorders of the reproductive organs of women. Itching of the vagina is helped by washing with a yarrow decoction. For inflammation of the ovaries, yarrow tea may be taken besides having a tub bath.
- ii. Sweetened amla (gooseberry) juice, in small quantities, relieves burning of the vagina. Amla helps in other gynocological problems also.
- iii. Decoction of the finely ground rind of pomegranates is good for vaginal and uterus conditions.

# **Menopause**

**Dr. Mrs. Saroj R. Wadhwa, M.D., F.A.C.O.G.**

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Menopause is the transitional change in a woman's life when menstrual function ceases. It is the point at which women stop ovulating. Estrogen levels drop in the body because there is no output of estrogen by the ovaries. Although menopause is a physiological phenomenon, risk of various problems increases for women, specifically there is a faster calcium loss from the bones (osteoporosis) making them prone to break and secondly post-menopausal women are equally likely to get hardening of the arteries and heart attack as men do. Menopause generally occurs between 45 and 55.

Menopausal symptoms consist of hot flashes, vaginal dryness and bladder symptoms. This change may occur continuously over several years though about 85% get hot flashes but only 10-15% have flashes severe enough to disrupt their daily life. This is a natural transition to the next phase of life. Menopause cannot be avoided but all inconveniences and pains connected therewith can be avoided.

Mental attitude has a lot to do as to how you take this transition and change. With proper nutrition and a positive mental attitude, it can be a positive experience for women. Menopause is not the end of something except of the inconvenience of monthly bleeding. Thereafter you can neither fear nor hope for pregnancy. Some even look at it as the beginning of their period of reward. Such an attitude makes the transition much easier and less traumatic.

Causes of mental trauma are lack of exercise, diet deficiency of calcium, phosphorus and Vitamins B, D & E, adrenal exhaustion, thyroid malfunction and stress. Symptoms during the transition are irregularity of flow, excessive flow, hot flashes, depression, urinary frequency, nervousness, drying of vaginal secretions and difficulty in sleeping.

Plenty of outdoor exercise is imperative at that stage of life if you want to avoid trauma. Sufficient sleep and relaxation help considerably. Sun basking brings sunshine into your life. Wet grass walks help considerably. If you could for sometime give up wearing synthetic fibers it is likely to make a difference. Wear loose and layered clothing preferably cotton.

Diet makes a lot of difference to the way your body reacts to these changes. You should follow suggestions made in the first chapter of the book regarding A Minimum Program of Food and Food Habits. Eat five or six small meals instead of loading your system three times a day. You will see the difference in your life. Regarding other special foods which will make a change for the better consider the following suggestions:

1. Calcium: There is a general depletion of calcium in the bones. USDA recommends postmenopausal women should take 1200 grams of calcium per day. But Dr. R.P. Heaney reports in the Journal of American Medical Association of 3 April 1981 that "Studies in my laboratory indicate that the overall estrogen deprived postmenopausal woman has a daily calcium requirement of 1500 mg. Significant sources of calcium are milk and its products, pulses, soybean and its products, green leafy vegetables, citrus fruit, sardines, peas, beans, peanuts, sunflower seeds.

2. Vitamin E: Rosetta Reitz in her book "Menopause: A Positive Approach" (Penguin 1979) on the basis of her experience says "Hot flashes of menopause can be greatly helped by supplemental

vitamin E." A supplement of 100 I.U. per day could be recommended.

3. Yogurt and buttermilk are reported to help. Avoid other dairy products since their cholesterol and fat content is high.
4. Yarrow herbal tea helps at the time of menopause.
5. Wheat germ oil and lecithin help in menopausal symptoms.
6. Royal jelly (from the honey beehives) has been used to deal with menopausal problems.
7. Molasses helps women during menopause.
8. Tufts University School of Medicine study as reported in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition vol. 49 of 1989 indicates that low fat, high fiber diet helped 16 out of 17 menopausal women.
9. Hormone tablets are known to work to cushion the shock of abrupt changes in your body's natural hormone levels.
10. Hot & cold alternate showers beginning with a hot shower (98 degrees to 104 degrees F or 37 degrees to 40 degrees C) for four minutes and ending with a cold shower (64 degrees F or 18 degrees C) of one minute, having alternated three times in between are recommended.
11. Sauna baths also help in case of menopause.
12. Norma McCloy of San Fransico State University and Davidson of Stanford University studied sexuality in many women who were just beginning to enter menopause. These findings were also confirmed by a survey questionnaire by Brecher et al for consumer reports readers. They found that majority of women had frequent sex binges and with the help of making sex talk, experimenting with various coital positions, taking adventure to the bedroom, and if needed, using vaginal lubricants, they reduced many negative experiences of menopause.

It is hoped that the above suggestions on diet and activity will promote a positive adaptation to menopause. May be this is the time to get involved in your favourite charity, take that long awaited trip, get into your favourite social, religious or political activity. Remember, menopause is a New Beginning.

# **Leucorrhoea**

**Dr. Mrs. Usha Jain,**  
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Leucorrhoea is a curse for womanhood. It is an abuse for the young females.

Secretion from the vagina at any time without any exciting cause is called leucorrhoea. These secretions could be yellow or have a tinge of black colour or could be frothy. The most common secretions, however, are white or dull white in colour.

Abortion, miscarriage, modern contraceptive devices, excess of sex, sexual gratification by unnatural means which weaken the sex apparatus and weaken sex nerves are the causes of leucorrhoea. Faulty liver function, drugs and vitamin deficiency could also cause this problem. Irregular and wrong food habits, indigestion, worry, tension, lack of physical exercise, late nights, and sudden shocks could be contributory causes.

If leucorrhoea is the result of some infection, the discharge may be thick and foul smelling. It can also be caused by imbalance of hormones. There is a direct relationship of this malady with nervous temperament. It occurs mostly among weak, emaciated and

anaemic females. It may also be the result of inflammation of the womb following child birth, displacement of uterus or gonorrhoea. Among young girls the malady may be caused by thread worms, general debility and lack of cleanliness. Late nights precipitate an attack of the disease. If the trouble becomes chronic, there may be irritability of temper.

In addition to the whitish discharge from the vagina there is weakness, pain in the lumbar region and the calves. There may also be an excess of bile and constipation, giddiness, black circles around eyes and heaviness in the lower abdomen.

For treating this body condition:—

Avoid fried, hot and spicy foods, pickles, savouries, maida and its products.

Late nights and sexual intercourse are, of course, taboo during the course of the disease. One must also give up sexual vices, if any.

Do not use nylon panties.

Wash the genitals with water after urination.

Washing and cleansing of the vagina and internal parts with alum water will be very effective. Self massage of the body, especially the abdomen, while taking bath, helps considerably. A regular douching of the genital tract with a decoction of the bark of the banyan or fig tree keeps the tissues of the vaginal tract healthy.

Hot and cold fomentation of the lower abdomen and mud pack for twenty to thirty minutes, enema with luke warm water or green water improves elimination. Sitz bath and hip bath daily for ten minutes, hot and cold hip bath once or twice a week activates the reproductive system.

Apply wet bandage on abdomen two or three times a day. Take cotton cloth about 25 cm (10 Inches) wide of such a length that it can go round your abdomen thrice over. Wet it in ordinary cool water and rinse it. Wrap this thrice around your abdomen, almost over lapping. Then wrap tightly a woolen bandage of the same width over it and fasten it. Go about your work for about 30 to 45 minutes. Open the bandage and rub that part of the body.

Freshly crushed raw garlic with half a spoon of olive oil or

soyabean oil may be taken at night before going to bed.

Fresh coconut water and juice of radish and its tender leaves or fenugreek (methi) leaves are also good. Yogurt and butter milk of cow or goat milk will reinstate a normal and favourable microbial balance in the body.

Yarrow herbal tea helps the entire reproductive system. The dried and powdered bark of Molsari tree mixed with an equal weight of raw sugar (brown in colour) should be taken in 8 to 10 gms dose every morning with water.

The root of the silk cotton tree (Sembhal) is another specific for this condition. 5 to 6 gms of its powder with an equal weight of raw sugar (brown in colour) should be taken with a glass of milk or, dry amla and liquorice should be taken in equal quantities and powdered and mixed with thrice the quantity of honey. 5 to 6 gms of the above should be taken in the morning and evening with milk.

The patient should chew betel nut after meals as it has curative effect.

The diet should consist of alkaline foods rich in Iron and calcium eg. Chaulai, Oranges, grapes or apple juice. Fruit of goolar, pipal and Banyan tree is a specific for this condition. Soak 125 gm goolar in 125 ml water at night. Mash and drink in the morning with honey.

**Breathing Exercise:** Deep slow controlled and rhythmic deep breathing in fresh air should be increased gradually from 50 to 100 times. Deep breathing is also taken as an indication of sexual ability.

**Pranayam:** Kapal Bhati, Nadi Shodhan, Bhastrika, Surya Bhedi should be done. Sex apparatus can be strengthened by practising servangasana (whole body) Bhujangasana (Serpent pose) and Dhanurasana (bow pose). Padmasan, Bhadrasana and Janushivasana strengthen the pelvic muscles and directly massage the generative organs.

The following yoga mudras help to impart vigour to ovaries, and the pelvic glands. Sit with your back straight and up right. Exhale completely. Draw up the anis and sex nerves for a count of ten, then inhale and relax. After five seconds again contract and draw up. Repeat 10-12 times. Uddian Bandha (Stomach uplift) and

Mool Bandha Anal contraction) relieve pelvic congestion and increase sexual energy. It is very important, especially for women, to learn to contract and relax the muscles from the hips to the knees. When done regularly this helps to condition the muscles of the vaginal walls to tighten them and bring them under control so one can use them at will.

Sit with your back straight and up right. Place the left heel on the urethra and the right heel on the pubes. Inhale gradually and simultaneously contract the sex nerve. This will raise the ovaries slightly. After 5 seconds relax with gradual exhalation. Repeat 10 times then change the position of heels and repeat for about 10 times.

Sit with your back straight and upright. Inhale slowly and simultaneously draw up the anal nerve so that attraction reaches middle of the space between the anus and the end of the scrotum. Exhale gradually relaxing the strain. Repeat 5 to 10 times. The sex nerves and the related glands will get massaged.

Practise Nadishodhak Pranayam as detailed elsewhere. Another version of Pranayam is known to tone up the ovaries in women and the testes in men. Sit with your back straight and upright, Exhale completely. Now strain the navel region as long as convenient and then inhale relaxing the tense region. Repeat, continue for 2 or 3 minutes.

The above mentioned mudras and version of pranayam help in all body conditions mentioned in this booklet.

# Colour Therapy

**Shri P.L. Aneja**  
Colour Therapy Specialist

Sun provides one of the five elements of the body. It is the source of all life on earth. Sun-light is a combination of all colours of the spectrum, visible and invisible. Sun worship and sun bathing date back to antiquity. The love of basking in the sun seems to be common to all living creatures.

Sunlight has been recognised as a powerful factor in building and maintaining health. The system of building health with the help of the sun and its different rays is known as heliotherapy or solar therapy or chromo-therapy or colour therapy. It is a drugless system.

Light travels at 1,8600000 miles per second. The seven colours of the rainbow i.e. violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange and red (Vibgyor) are due to their different wave-lengths. There are some invisible colour wave lengths also. Three colours on one extreme i.e. violet, indigo and blue are cooling and soothing in nature. Three colours on the other extreme i.e. yellow, orange and red are hot and stimulating in nature. The green colour of the spectrum is a harmonizing colour. It maintains balance between the hot and cooling colours.

The classic work "The Principles of Light and Colour" written by Dr. Edwin D. Babbitt, published in 1879, is one of the master pieces on colour therapy.

Recently Dr. Alexander Schauss, Director, The American Institute of Bio-social Research in Tacome, Washington has stated that "These bands of light energy stimulate the pituitary and pineal glands, regulate hormones and other physiological systems in the body." These findings have been consistent even in those with visual handicaps and blind. Colour is a form of energy that produces physiological changes. The Changes are not the result of psychological or cultural factors". In one study in U.S.A. children prone to tantrums and aggressive behaviour became calmer after being in a class room painted blue. Interestingly both blind and children with sight, reacted the same calm in the blue surroundings. These findings support Dr. Schauss's theory that colour responses are physiological rather than psychological or cultural.

There are various methods of using colour for health. Charging water/oil are two frequently used methods. Short time exposure of the body to the sun is another method. Charging the air in coloured empty corked bottles and then inhaling the charged air (colour breathing) also helps. Visualising of a particular colour during meditation is another method. Misri (sugar candy) or homeopathic milk sugar pills, which have been suncharged for at least 30 days, prove helpful during difficult days. It would be carried for use whenever an emergency arises.

Following action may be taken with respect to various body conditions of women:

- 1. Amenorrhoea (No menses):** Mix two parts of suncharged orange water with one part of green charged water. Take about 80 to 100 mls. of such water three times a day. Have a daily massage of the pelvic region and back side of the waist with orange charged oil.
- 2. Excess bleeding:** Have a massage with blue charged oil on the pelvic region. During the menses have a blue charged water pack on that region. Have blue clothes for night dress and, if not inconvenient, sleep under blue light at night.
- 3. Painful or irregular menses:** Sleep under ordinary bulb light, not tube light. Start applying orange charged oil on the pelvis and back

waist areas two or three days before the onset of menses, twice a day i.e. early morning and at night. Take a mixture of orange charged water and green charged water thrice a day as mentioned at No. 1 above. On the first day of the menses do not take a full bath of the body. General sun bath once a week between 1 to 3 hours after sunrise & 4 to 5 could also be helpful.

**4. Leucorrhœa:** Take a douche with sun-charged green water twice a day, on an empty stomach in the morning and second in the evening before dinner. Also cook neem leaves in water and use that green water for douche once a day.

**5. Itching of uterus:** Wash the uterus with blue sun-charged water. Drink a mixture of green and white sun-charged waters, twice a day.

**6. Threatened miscarriage:** Have a cold water sitz bath. Massage the pelvic region twice a day with blue charged oil. Drink thrice a day an equal mixture of green charged and blue charged waters, half a cup at a time.

In other cases of disturbance of the normal body condition of women, drink half a cup of green charged water first thing in the morning. Wash the eyes with green charged water and gargle with that water. Also have half a cup of green charged water about half an hour before the major meals and orange charged water half an hour after each such meal. If you are on the move and cannot have charged water, use charged homeopathic milk sugar pills instead. This prescription will specially help in case of hair problems.

For preparing green charged water, take a green bottle. Fill 3/4 of it with potable water. Cork it. Place it on an unpolished wooden piece in an open place exposed to the direct rays of the sun. Keep it in sun for a minimum of 8 hours. Green charged water is ready. This will be indicated by the appearance of droplets on the inside open surface of the bottle. The more the bottle is kept in the sun, the more effective the water becomes. In that case occasionally clean the outer part of the bottle and shake it mildly. The bottle may be allowed to remain out even at night. For preparing orange or blue charged water, use a bottle of that colour.

For preparing sun charged oil, take a bottle of the prescribed colour. Fill 1/2 of it with any oil. Mustard oil may be better for blue

and sesame oil for orange bottles. Cork it. Place it on an unpolished wooden piece in an open place exposed to the direct rays of the sun. Keep it there for a period of 40 days. Longer, the better. Need not shift the bottle inside at night. Clean and shake the bottle once in a while.

Caution: During menses green charged water should not be taken alone.

## Miscellaneous

Women are more prone to bladder problems than men. The female urethra, the tube carrying urine from the bladder, is located just above the vagina. The urethra is short in length and can be easily contaminated by vaginal bacteria. The male urethra is quite long and not easily accessible to bacteria. Infection originally comes from her rectum. The women should, after each bowel movement, cleanse properly and wipe from front to back so that the bacteria are not transferred from the rectum into her vagina or urethra. After each intercourse the woman should urinate immediately so that the bacteria which have been put into the urethra by the thrusting penis are washed out. She should thereafter take some fluid, water or traditional hot milk in India. That will help her to flush out a second time. It is advisable to empty your bladder before intercourse as well. In one study women who postpone urinating for more than 15 minutes after sex were likely to develop urinary tract infection.

To avoid urinary problems drink lot of fluids so that flushing takes place. Cranberry Juice helps in these problems. It acidifies the urine which prevents the bacterial growth in the urinary tract.

Some women consider douching necessary for the sanitation of their reproductive system. This is not correct.

According to the American Medical Association 'Book of Woman Care' 1982 frequent vaginal douching can shrink the vagi-

nal tissues, make inter-course painful and cause vaginal irritation. "The vaginal vault acts to cleanse itself by mucus secretion, which moves from the upper part down toward the entrance. Gentle cleansing in a bath or shower is recommended, using fingers and mild soapy water inside the lower two or three inches of the vagina. Perfumed spray or deodorant products for vaginal use are not generally recommended by gynecologists because of the risk of painful inflammation".

Cases of incontinence are known where one wets oneself when one laughs or sneezes or when one exercises. It may have a neurological basis. The exercise to control this is simple. "Every time you urinate, let the flow start then stop it, start and stop till you can stop and start the urine at least 5 times." Start immediately after the urination begins when you have a full bladder.

In non pregnant women, mild cyclic breast tenderness does not require a special treatment. A low salt diet may decrease engorgement of the breasts during premenstrual period. A supportive bra is advisable if you are prone to breast soreness, especially during physical activity.

Recent studies indicate that fibrocystic breast disease may improve if the caffeine intake is eliminated. In another study vitamin E when taken for two months was reported to decrease the symptoms. In case of breast infection hot compresses will reduce the symptoms generally.

Increase the iron content of the diet. To increase absorption of iron, take it with foods rich in vitamin C and in between major meals. Cooking in iron pots also increases the iron content of food. Try to meet the situation by taking iron rich foods and avoid supplements. These vitamin and minerals should preferably be taken through foods rich in these.







